VISIT…

BAD MOON WANING

A Short Adventure for Four 10th-Level Player Characters

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Bad Moon Waning is a short D&D adventure for four 10th-level player characters (PCs), though it can be modified for higher- or lower-level play if desired (see the Scaling the Adventure sidebar).

The adventure is set in and around the village of Deepwood, an isolated town located as its name suggests in the heart of a great forest. It can easily be placed in a remote, wooded area of any campaign world.

PREPARATION

You (the DM) need the D&D core rulebooks, including the *Player's Handbook*, the DUNGEON MASTER'S *Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. This adventure utilizes the v.3.5 rules, but it can easily be used with the 3.0 rules as well.

You can place this adventure in any section of your campaign world that features a remote, forested area in which an isolated town might exist. If there is a small town that the PCs visited in a past adventure but haven t returned to in quite a while, so much the better. As always, feel free to adapt the material presented here as you see fit to make it work with your campaign.

To get started, print out this adventure (including the maps). Read through the scenario at least once to familiarize yourself with the situation, threats, and major NPCs (particularly their motivations). Make adjustments as necessary to fit the storyline into your campaign.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Deepwood is a small community consisting of hunters, loggers, artisans, and a few hardy families who just prefer to live far away from cities. There are a couple of farms in the surrounding area, but the people here subsist for the most part on fish, game, and naturally-growing crops such as mushrooms, wild vegetables, and seasonal fruit.

The people of Deepwood have always led quiet lives. Traders come through a few times a year to exchange goods and materials made in the cities for local furs, pelts, artwork, and lumber, but otherwise there are few visitors. The nearest town of any significant size lies several days ride to the east. News from the outside world takes a long while to reach this isolated community, and word of events taking place in Deepwood can take days or even weeks to spread to the rest of the world. Until recently, however, very few people noticed or cared about such delays, since so little of interest ever happened here.

In the past few days, however, word has begun to spread in the outlying areas that all is not well in Deepwood. The only point on which the rumors agree is that the local priestess has been slain savagely mauled by some sort of animal and that terrible creature now stalks the tiny village, seeking more prey.

Beyond this information, the details are sketchy and sometimes conflicting. Some tales say that the beast has already been killed; others claim that the townsfolk have seen several half-man-half-beast creatures roaming the woods at night. A few say that the woods around the village echo with the howls of an unusual number of wolves and wild dogs.

THE TRUTH ABOUT DEEPWOOD

Although most of the townsfolk do not know it, werewolves make up a significant percentage of Deepwood s populace. All of these shapechangers are natural lycanthropes humans who were born with the ability to transform into wolves or wolf-human hybrids. They have chosen to make their homes in this remote village, where they can indulge their wild natures in the nearby forest without frightening or causing harm to their neighbors.

Despite the wild blood that runs through their veins, the werewolves who live in Deepwood are all good people. Not one of them has ever taken a human life, nor do any of them plan to do so. Deepwood is their home, and they consider everyone living there to be part of their pack, werewolf or no.

Several nights per month (particularly nights of the full moon), the Deepwood werewolves run through the forest as a pack, hunting deer or other game and celebrating their wild heritage. This hunting ritual has been going on for years, and no normal member of the community has ever suspected the truth. Thus, the members of the Deepwood pack have been able to live in freedom and harmony with both their surroundings and their human neighbors for many decades.

THE LEADER OF THE PACK

Two months ago, the peace and harmony of Deepwood was shattered. The pack was hunting a particularly large and powerful buck in the forest by the light of the full moon. But just as the Deepwood werewolves were about to bring down their prey, a tremendous wolf bigger than any three members of the pack combined burst from the surrounding foliage and snapped the deer s neck with one bite of his massive jaws.

By right of strength, he growled, I claim leadership of this pack. You will all do as I say or face the consequences.

Naturally, the pack objected, and its leader (a huntsman named Trammil Nimman) challenged the new wolf, even though the latter outweighed him by a considerable amount. The pack knew that his effort was doomed to failure, but rather than killing Trammil, the new wolf merely beat him into unconsciousness.

I do not wish to kill any of you, he said. That would only weaken my new pack. But I will brook no dissent. The next one who fails to follow my orders to the letter will feel the full extent of my wrath.

The new leader seemed so bloodthirsty that the werewolves feared he might order them to attack their human neighbors. To their relief, however, no such order was forthcoming. The new werewolf simply led the pack into the hills to a cave entrance that was masked almost completely by thick foliage.

Once there, he assumed a hybrid form and pulled the curtain of leaves aside. The moonlight streamed into the cave, revealing walls speckled with gold. Using his tremendous strength, he struck one of the walls and released a shower of rocks several of which turned out to be gold nuggets the size of a man s fist.

This cavern is as large as a house, he said. Each night, four of you will come here and mine the gold as I ve just shown you. If you do not, I will reveal the your true natures to the humans in your town.

The werewolves saw no other choice, so they obeyed their new leader. Each night, four of them came to the cave and dug out pound after pound of gold from the cave walls. When they were finished, they took the gold first to Trammil, who recorded the amount in a ledger, and then to a secret glade for hiding.

Night after night they extracted gold from the cave. While working, they discussed several possible solutions to their plight. Some members suggested that the pack join together to attack this new wolf, but most believed in the traditional practice of following the strongest individual. Attacking as a group is for bringing down food, not a brother wolf. To challenge the new leader in any way other than one-on-one combat was deemed dishonorable and cowardly.

A few members of the pack offered to travel to the city and hire champions to defeat the new wolf. After all, they pointed out, other communities often did such things when a monster moved into the area, and their new leader could certainly be defined as a monster. But most of the Deepwood werewolves felt that such a solution would be just as dishonorable as ganging up on their tormentor.

If they knew his human identity, they mused, perhaps they could at least gain equal footing with him by threatening to reveal his secret unless he left the pack

in peace. But neither his hybrid appearance nor his scent reminded them of anyone they knew. They were sure that he had to be a citizen of Deepwood (or at least someone who visited very frequently), else he could not know so much about the pack and its relationship with the townsfolk. But they were at a loss to identify him.

ARMON BISTLE

The pack s new leader is actually Armon Bistle, the richest person in Deepwood. Though he is not a werewolf, he owns a talisman that allows him to mimic a werewolf s powers, including the scent ability. With this artifact, known as *Gnarlpaw's Fang*, he managed to discover the true identities of the members of the Deepwood pack by picking up werewolf scents on them while they were in human form.

Armon actually has nothing against the pack. He s known those people since moving to Deepwood more than a year ago, and they have never been anything but good neighbors to him. But Armon has always been a manipulative, opportunistic man, and he will stop at nothing to gain more wealth.

Before moving to Deepwood, Armon made his living from confidence schemes. His typical ploy was to move into a new town, make friends with the locals, and then come up with an elaborate plan to fleece them of all their wealth.

Bistle was good at his trade, and he managed to amass quite a fortune in gold, gems, and other valuables. Considering that he had been forced to flee from lynch mobs in the last three cities where he had worked his schemes, he decided that it might be time to retire. So he took his ill-gotten loot, changed his name, and moved to Deepwood, a community so remote that he was sure none of his former neighbors could ever find him.

Initially, Armon had no intention of taking advantage of his new neighbors. Their combined wealth was less than one-fifth of what he d already amassed, so taking it would hardly be worth his while. More importantly, though, he knew that this village was probably the last safe place in the world where he could hide.

Greed, however, is more powerful than logic. And when Armon happened to discover a cave that was practically made of gold, he decided to use *Gnarlpaw's fang*, a magic item he d acquired during his last job, to take the form of Gnarlpaw, an ancient werewolf lord, and coerce the Deepwood pack into doing his bidding.

THE LONE WOLF

For a while, events went exactly as Armon Bistle had planned. The Deepwood pack obeyed his orders, mined the gold, and hid it away. Only Trammil Nimman ever showed signs of disobedience, growling under his breath as he recorded the amount of treasure in his ledger each morning. As the pack s former leader, Trammil desperately wanted to oust Armon, but he could never get the rest of the pack to agree on a means other than single combat to do so.

As time went on, Trammil became bolder. He spent most nights sniffing around the village in his wolf form, hoping to catch the scent of the new leader on a villager and thus establish his identity. Alas, his attempts were doomed to failure because, unlike a real werewolf, Armon smelled like a human in human form and like the ancient werewolf lord Gnarlpaw in wolf or hybrid form. Thus, the scent that Trammil and the other werewolves recognized as their pack leader was totally absent when he resumed human form. But although Armon knew that the item protected him from detection by this means, he also realized that it was only a matter of time before he made some error that would enable Trammil to discover the truth. Thus, Armon decided to gain some unwitting aid in removing his rival.

One evening, Bistle used *Gnarlpaw's fang* to transform into Gnarlpaw, then prowled around town until Trammil picked up his scent. He led the werewolf on a tremendous chase that ended in the town s only house of worship a small temple dedicated to the goddess Ehlonna. There Armon savagely slaughtered Ishtal, the elf priestess who ran the temple. As he had hoped, Trammil followed his scent to the temple, where Armon waited to attack him. With his teeth and claws, Bistle savaged his opponent, but stopped short of delivering the killing blow. Instead, Armon fled the temple, transformed back into his own shape, and ran through the town screaming Murder! at the top of his lungs. Trammil, who lay near death from Armon s attacks, had barely staggered to his feet by the time the townsfolk arrived.

Suddenly realizing the picture he presented as a wolf covered in blood beside the corpse of the priestess, Trammil changed back to his human form and tried to tell his fellow villagers the truth. But seeing a killer beast turn into their friend and neighbor only frightened the humans more. The werewolf townsfolk tried to talk some sense into their human neighbors, pointing out the need for a proper trial, but the terrified humans refused to listen. They bound and gagged poor Trammil, dragged him out of town, and hanged him. Torn between loyalty to their friend and fear of discovery, the other werewolves in town made no further effort to stop the hanging, knowing that if their own natures were discovered, they would face a choice between shedding innocent blood and sharing Trammil s fate.

SHADOW OF THE WOLF

In death, Trammil reverted to his human shape. But the townsfolk left him hanging there and placed a sign reading murdering dog around his neck as a warning to any other werewolves that might be near.

Deepwood is now a town nearly paralyzed by fear. Trammil had been a member of the community for years and yet no one had ever suspected his dark secret. Worse still, upon searching his belongings, the townsfolk found a ledger containing notes in a language that they could not read. Could this be a list of other local werewolves? After all, werewolves often run in packs. Who else among them might be a murderous beast in disguise?

The townsfolk decided to place the book in the temple under constant surveillance, reasoning that sooner or later one of the other werewolves would try to steal it. If they could capture that person alive, they might be able to gain more information. Alternatively, if someone with knowledge of this language happened through town, they might be able to prevail upon that person to reveal the book s contents to them.

In fact, the book is Trammil s ledger, in which he recorded the daily amounts of gold and the specific locations where the werewolves buried it. The language is a shorthand used by woodcutters and caravan drivers (the only language that Armon and Trammil shared, other than Common). Although no member of the pack can read the book either, they all know the general nature of its contents and do not feel that they can gain any information from it. Only Armon has an interest in the book.

Since Trammil s hanging, the pack has refused to do any more digging. In fact, its members have stopped transforming into wolves altogether. While they find living solely in human form a bit restrictive after giving free rein to their wild sides for so long, they can think of no other way to break the big wolf s hold over them and break it they must, before more tragedy ensues.

Since the werewolves refuse to take on wolf form anymore, Armon has no further means to coerce them. He cannot approach them in his human form and threaten to divulge their secrets because that would reveal his own identity. And he cannot move through town in wolf form because the townsfolk are more than happy to slay wolves on sight. At this point, Armon just wants to retrieve what gold he can and leave Deepwood forever. But first he has to find a way to get his hands on Trammil s ledger.

To complicate matters still further, Trammil s death has convinced the Deepwood werewolves to turn on their unwanted leader. Various members of the pack have been taking turns guarding the area where the gold is hidden. They plan to assume wolf form and attack anyone who comes to retrieve it, since the only person who could know about it is their tormentor.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

Upon arriving at the outskirts of Deepwood, the PCs see Trammil s body hanging from a tree. As they proceed into town, they sense that the inhabitants are

THE MORAL QUANDARY

Although it may not be obvious at first, the pivotal question on which this scenario turns is this: How will the people of Deepwood react when they find out that they have hanged an innocent man?

Trammil died both because of his lycanthropic nature and because he allowed himself to be maneuvered into a compromising position. He was never permitted to plead his innocence because the townsfolk presumed that, as a werewolf, he must be guilty. But even though many characters would call Trammil a "monster," the fact remains that he was punished for a crime he did not commit.

Several aspects of this adventure also hinge on a tangential question: What will the ordinary citizens of Deepwood do when they find out that their neighbors are werewolves?

The werewolves of the Deepwood pack have successfully hidden their true nature from friends, neighbors, and even loved ones for decades. Can the ordinary citizens of the town accept, understand, and—most importantly—forgive the pack for its years of deception?

There is no easy answer to either of these questions. Indeed, it is these aspects of the plot that you as DM can most easily adapt to suit your purposes. But before you can do that, you must decide what message you want to impart. Possibilities include:

- Appearances can be deceiving.
- Not all "monsters" are evil.
- Never hide the truth, no matter how monstrous, from those you love.
- Punishment meted out too swiftly is often tainted with injustice.
- Nothing is as simple as it first seems.

extremely fearful about something. They can interact with the townsfolk as much as they wish to gather information regarding recent events. All such information comes from the perspective of innocent humanoid residents who know nothing about the Deepwood pack or Armon s secret.

Eventually, using either their own abilities or a scroll of *comprehend languages* that remains in the Temple of Ehlonna, the PCs can decipher Trammil s ledger. The information therein leads them to the Vale of the Silvery Moon, where a confrontation with some of the Deepwood werewolves (and Armon, if he still lives) occurs.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The PCs could come to Deepwood for any of several reasons. They might come of their own accord after hearing rumors about a werewolf terrorizing an innocent village. Or they might inadvertently come across Deepwood while traveling to or from a different adventure. Perhaps one or more of the characters even hails from this remote town.

As DM, you know best how to involve your players and their characters in an adventure. You can use the following adventure hooks to spur your imagination, modifying them as necessary to make them appropriate for the characters interests.

- While traveling, the PCs encounter a merchant or other wanderer who has just come from Deepwood. In the course of conversation, she tells them of the troubles there.
- Several people who were swindled by a con artist named Sv rd Coppermill (Armon s previous identity) hire the PCs to track down their nemesis. After a difficult investigation, they discover that Sv rd seems to have relocated to Deepwood.
- In a previous adventure, the PCs confronted a werewolf that managed to elude capture. For months (or even years), they were unable to locate their quarry, but the news from Deepwood seems to match this creature s modus operandi.
- The PCs are on a quest to find *Gnarlpaw's fang*. Either their own inquiries and research put them on Armon s trail, or successful divinations point them toward a tiny village in a remote forest.

BEGINNING THE ADVENTURE

This adventure consists primarily of freeform encounters, which may be run in any order. Some encounter areas are keyed to the maps; the specific placement of the others is up to you as DM.

The adventure begins with encounter A as the PCs approach the town of Deepwood. Thereafter, the encounters may be used in any order, depending on where the PCs decide to go and what they do.

A. APPROACH TO TOWN

The first clue about what s happening in Deepwood comes as the PCs reach the outskirts of the town. Several details may vary depending on how much time has passed since the night of Trammil s hanging.

If the PCs wander into Deepwood while in midst of some other adventure, or if they come for some reason other than hearing of the werewolf attack, they could arrive as early as the morning after the horrific events. In this case, all the evidence is fresh, and the townsfolk s emotions are especially raw.

If the PCs are responding to the news of the attack, they can arrive three days after the murder and hanging

SCALING THE ADVENTURE

Bad Moon Waning is designed for a party of four 10th-level adventurers, but it can easily be modified to present an appropriate challenge for parties of different sizes or levels. Consider adapting the adventure as follows.

Four 8th-Level PCs: Run the adventure as written, but with the following changes.

- Reduce the number of werewolves in encounter D to three.
- Reduce Armon's hit points when he uses *Gnarlpaw's fang* by 25%.

Four 12th-Level PCs: Run the adventure as written, but with the following changes:

- Increase the number of werewolves in encounter D to seven.
- Add two fighter levels to Armon in his werewolf lord form. (The creature is currently a 10th-level fighter with the lycanthrope template; see his statistics in encounter D and the werewolf lord entry in the *Monster Manual*.)

if they use some magical means to speed their travel to Deepwood. It takes a total of six days to travel there by conventional overland methods. But whether they arrive in three days or six, the townsfolk have had time to clean up the temple, bury the priestess, and begin to deal with their emotions.

Read or paraphrase the following aloud as the characters approach Deepwood. Adjust the text as needed to suit the exact situation.

> The forest begins to thin slightly, and the dirt path winding through it becomes wide enough to be defined as a road. A small, crudely painted sign by the side of the road reads Welcome to Deepwood. Along the bottom, someone has carved a few additional words: As far from anywhere as you ll ever find.
>
> A newer and less inviting sign of human habitation hangs from a nearby elm tree a human corpse dangling from a noose. It is dressed in rags, and a placard reading murdering dog is affixed to its shirt.

The corpse is that of Trammil Nimman. Its condition depends entirely on how long the PCs took getting to Deepwood.

Development: The rope from which the body hangs is woven through with a leafy vine. A successful Knowledge (nature) check reveals it as wolfbane.

The PCs can lower Trammil s body to the ground if they like, or they can use spells to examine it where it hangs. Neither tactic reveals anything of interest about his body.

If the PCs use *speak with dead* on the body, Trammil gives them the information contained in the journal hidden in his cabin (area B7).

The town of Deepwood lies only a short distance down the road from this point. Each PC may attempt a Spot check upon leaving area A. A check result that beats DC 10 reveals that the streets seem unusually empty. A DC 15 or better check result reveals several people watching the party s actions from behind curtains or shutters. Anyone whose check result beats DC 20 saw people in the streets who immediately fled into their homes upon noticing the PCs near the tree.

No matter how long the PCs wait, none of the residents leave their homes or approach the PCs while they are standing near the corpse and the tree. Once the characters enter Deepwood, their reception improves slightly.

B. THE TOWN OF DEEPWOOD

The citizens of this small village, both werewolf and human, have been traumatized by recent events. Most have spent a great deal of the time since Ishtal s murder and Trammil s hanging locked in their huts and cabins for safety. Whispered talk among neighbors has fueled a keen paranoia, as the normal townsfolk consider who else among their neighbors might be a murderous shapechanger, and the shapechangers wonder if they will be next on the hanging tree.

Read or paraphrase the following aloud when the PCs enter Deepwood.

> The town of Deepwood is a collection of shacks, cabins, and one or two fancier buildings nestled in a large clearing in the forest. Smoke wafts from many of the chimneys, hinting at a goodly number of residents, but none of them are visible. The streets are empty, and all the windows are shuttered.

The townsfolk are even more wary of strangers than they are of each other particularly strangers who have displayed an interest in the body on the hanging tree. Still, both hospitality and curiosity demand that someone greet the newcomers. By default, that person is Edvard Kititch, the closest thing Deepwood has to a mayor.

> Greetings, strangers! calls a tall, thin man stepping from a sturdy cabin in the center of town. I am Edvard Kititch, he says, casting a wary look about him. Welcome to Deepwood. Please forgive our lack of hospitality, but the town has been languishing under the shadow of a terrible tragedy.

Edvard is quite willing to explain recent events if the PCs have not already heard the tales. If they tell Edvard that they have come to help, he becomes quite effusive, shaking their hands and thanking them profusely. Then he calls for the other townsfolk to come out of hiding.

At that point, several citizens come out to greet the PCs, but clearly not the entire populace. Despite the recent horrors, life goes on. People still have to hunt, fish, gather wood and berries, and tend both the domestic and the wild animals in the region.

Creatures: There are only a dozen or so households in Deepwood. Most of the townsfolk with the

exception of the Deepwood pack are 1st-level human commoners, but you may also want to make a few of them experts or warriors. It is not necessary to create full statistics for everyone in town, but you should try to provide as much detail as the campaign requires.

Development: The citizens immediately begin to ply the PCs with questions. Is their town safe? Are there more monsters in their midst? And why did Trammil kill the priestess Ishtal? Some of them implore the PCs to get to the bottom of this situation; others simply cry or continue asking questions.

If the PCs agree to help the citizens, Edvard gives them permission to enter any building and look in any cabinet, box, or hiding space they deem necessary. He is willing to shoulder full responsibility for their actions if they will try to end this nightmare.

B1. KITITCH'S CABIN

Edvard Kititch and his wife Lilly share this comfortable cabin. Edvard is a tanner, and he maintains a separate cabin nearby in which to practice his trade. He is also the closest thing Deepwood has to a mayor an even-tempered, fair man to whose judgement his neighbors generally defer.

Edvard and Lilly are only recently wed. Lilly is the daughter of Pruert and Ginny Jyles (see area B14). She is also a werewolf, although she has not shared this secret with her new husband as yet. Even as fair-minded as Edvard is, she fears that he will turn his back on her (or worse) when he learns the truth.

Creatures: If Edvard is not already escorting the PCs, he is here when they arrive. Lilly, however, is standing guard at the Temple of Ehlonna (see area B11).

THE DEEPWOOD PACK

While the citizens of Deepwood are unanimous in their desire to see their current situation resolved and normalcy restored to the town, some of them are understandably uncomfortable with the possibility that the PCs may uncover all the town's secrets. Eight of the townsfolk have gone through a great deal of trouble over the years to hide the fact that they are werewolves from their neighbors.

MARKED TERRITORY

The pack has marked the town and surrounding woods as its territory. Rangers, druids, and other characters who are skilled at tracking wild creatures may, at the DM's discretion, occasionally notice wolf markers of various kinds, including scratches on surfaces and musky odors on large and important buildings or trees.

While examining the homes of members of the Deepwood pack, the PCs may notice other behavior patterns that are reminiscent of wolves or wild dogs. For example, they might find important items "buried" under piles of less important possessions. Or if a werewolf has children, the room where the youngsters sleep may be located as far from the entrance as possible, and the parents might try to interpose themselves between the PCs and that door at all times.

FINDING THE PACK

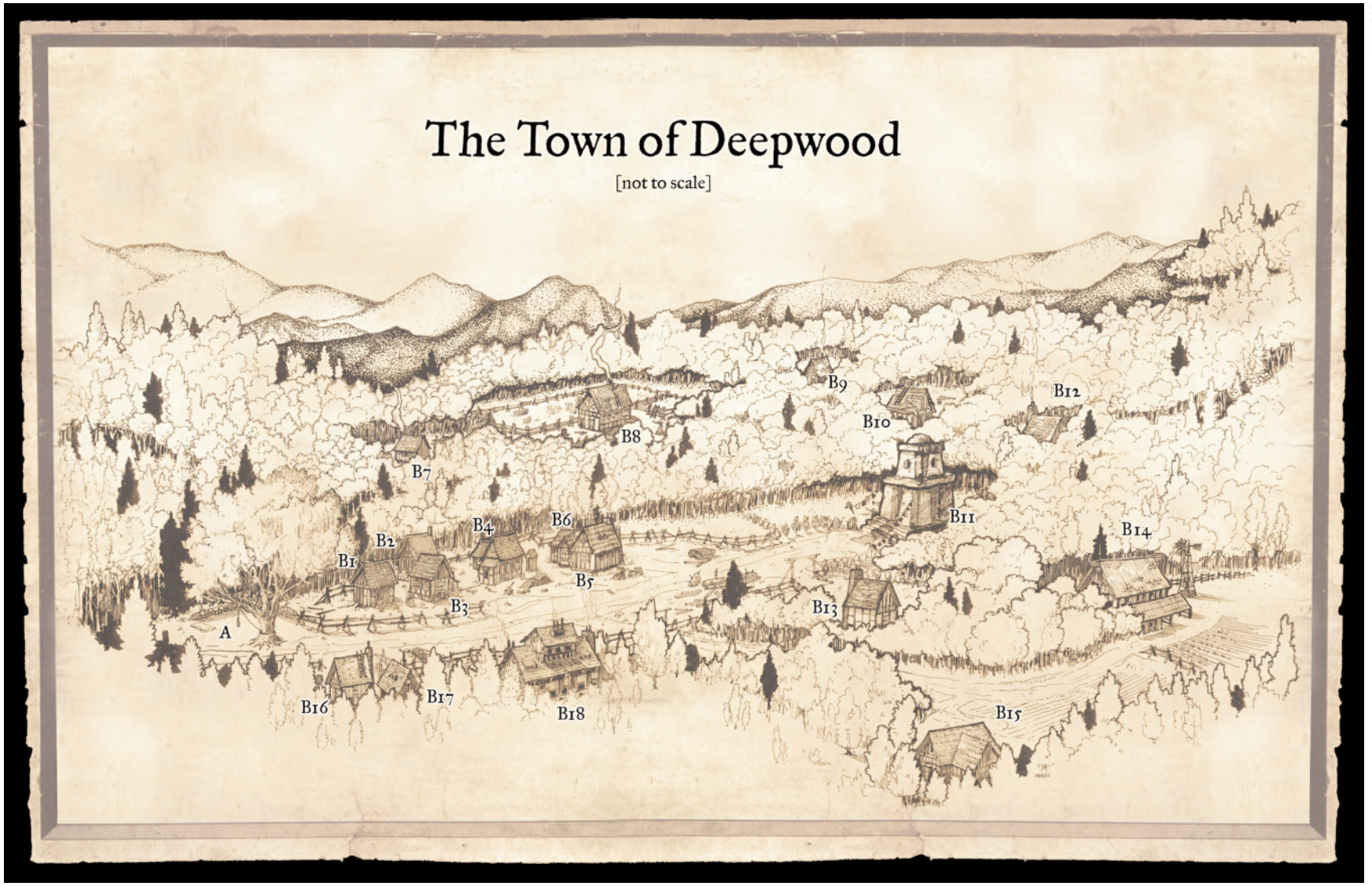
The characters may be able to discover the nature of the Deepwood pack through the use of extraordinary abilities or magic (particularly spells from the Divination school). They might also turn up clear evidence of the pack's innocence in the recent troubles. The results of their investigation hinge on what questions they ask and to what conclusions they jump.

When presenting information, answering questions, and adjudicating the effects of spells as DM, do your best to give the players truthful information while still leaving room for interpretation. It's important that the PCs be able to make their own judgments about what really happened on the night of the murder and hanging.

If the PCs confront any werewolves with the truth about their natures, they do not deny the allegation, but they do nothing to cast suspicion on any as yet undiscovered members of the pack. They do, however, ask the PCs to keep their secret. After all, they have been members of this community for years and never personally done anything to hurt anyone.

If asked directly whether they knew about Trammil's true nature, members of the pack affirm that they did but insist that he could not have killed the priestess because doing so would have been against his nature. They suspect that their new leader actually killed the cleric, though they do not know it for sure, and they refuse to speculate about the murderer's identity at all. (Right now, like it or not, Armon Bistle is the leader of the Deepwood pack, and as such he is a problem that they wish to deal with by themselves.)

Unless otherwise noted, use the werewolf statistics given in the Lycanthrope entry in the *Monster Manual* for all members of the Deepwood pack, except that each can have any neutral or good alignment.


The Town of Deepwood
[not to scale]
A
B1
B2
B3
B4
B5
B6
B7
B8
B9
B10
B11
B12
B13
B14
B15
B16
B17
B18

Edvard Kititch: Male human Commoner 1; hp 3.

Development: This cabin contains nothing of value to the PCs investigation. However, the group might find evidence of marked territory here, as discussed in the Deepwood Pack sidebar.

B2. TANNERY

This small shack behind the Kititch cabin is where Edvard tans leather and hides brought to him by hunters, trappers, and various other members of the Deepwood community. Read or paraphrase the following aloud when the PCs enter.

> This cabin has no doors, but its many windows provide excellent ventilation. Even so, however, a nauseating stench wafts through the building. In the corner stand two barrels one large and one small. A clay pit filled with pungent, murky, brown water fills the central area. A pole spans the pit just below the water s surface, and several animal hides are draped over it, submerged in the liquid.

Creatures: No one is here unless Edvard has accompanied the PCs.

Development: The large barrel contains crushed bark. A Knowledge (nature) check (DC 15) reveals that this bark was taken from an oak tree. The smaller barrel is filled with dung, which is used in the first stage of tanning. A Knowledge (nature) check (DC 25) reveals that it is the dung of a carnivore of at least the same size as a human.

All these items are standard materials for the unpleasant job of tanning. Anyone who succeeds at a Spot check (DC 10) notices that Edvard has thoughtfully located his workshop downwind of Deepwood proper.

B3. SMOKEHOUSE

Read or paraphrase the following aloud when the PCs enter this cabin.

> This small cabin has only one door and no windows. Inside, the air in the single room is hot, dry, and filled with thick clouds of smoke that emanate from a clay fire box near the far wall. Strips of meat hang on racks in the center of the room.

This cabin is where the people of Deepwood smoke meats to preserve them for use at a later date (usually either on a long journey or during the winter months). The smokehouse is the only truly communal building in Deepwood, since all the citizens of the town contributed to purchasing the land and materials and building the structure.

Creatures: No one is here when the PCs arrive.

Development: There is nothing useful to the investigation in this building.

B4. LEONE'S CABIN

This cabin belongs to Enga Leone and her partner Avon Vestille. The two women are trappers and taxidermists who have found a veritable gold mine of small animals in the local woods. Rather than compete with one another for the pelts, they ve pooled their resources. As a result, they make a respectable profit from the merchants who come through town every few months.

Unbeknownst to Enga, Avon is a werewolf. She decided to work with Enga so that she would be in a position to tell the pack where all the local traps had been placed.

Read or paraphrase the following aloud when the PCs enter.

> The cabin s main room is filled with pelts, traps, and dozens of stuffed and mounted rabbits, beavers, and badgers. A closed cabinet stands near one wall. Hanging from the walls are deer, cougar, and bear heads. This area looks very much like a hunter s trophy room.

Creatures: Both Avon and Enga are present when the PCs arrive.

Avon: Female human werewolf Warrior 1; hp 20 (see *Monster Manual* page 175).

Enga: Female human Commoner 1; hp 3.

Negotiations: Both women give permission for the PCs to search their cabin, though Avon seems somewhat reticent and wary about answering their questions.

Development: Each woman has her own bedroom. A successful Search check (DC 12) of Avon s room reveals some of the clues described in the Deepwood Pack sidebar.

A full-size stuffed wolf is hidden beneath the bed in Enga s room. If the characters ask why it is not displayed in the main room with the other taxidermy, Enga shrugs and explains that Avon detests it and flies into a rage every time she sees it.

Development: The cabinet is unlocked. It contains a small barrel of sawdust, several boxes filled with glass eyes, and a thick leather bundle. Unrolling the bundle reveals several scalpels, surgical saws, and

other implements useful for removing the viscera from a trophy before stuffing it for display.

B5. MENDIS' HOUSE

Rajel Mendi lives in this large home with her husband Rik, their two daughters Keri (14 years old) and Yamile (11 years old), and their son Bosh (7 years old). The unofficial sixth member of the family is Cral Redfoot, Rajel s apprentice, but he lives in Rajel s workshop (area B6).

The house features a large central living area and a single bedroom where Rajel and Rik sleep. The children sleep in the loft.

Rajel is an alchemist. She spends most of her days in her workshop (area B6), and for most of their marriage, Rik has spent the majority of his time caring for the children. But now that Bosh is old enough to study with the other village children (see area B13), Rik is learning to be a forester. A few times a week, Avi Fincher (see area B12) takes him into the woods and teaches him some of the basic skills of the trade.

Creatures: No one is at home when the PCs arrive here.

Development: There is nothing of importance to the investigation in this house. However, the entire home is spotlessly clean a fact that the PCs may find interesting or even suspicious.

B6. ALCHEMIST'S WORKSHOP

Behind the Mendis house stands a small cabin where Rajel practices her craft. Here she mixes alchemical solutions, experiments with new ingredients and formulae, and creates any salves and ointments her friends and neighbors require. Read or paraphrase the following aloud when the PCs enter.

> The walls of this small cabin are lined with long, flat tables. Each is covered with a maze of stoppered bottles, mortars and pestles, vials of different-colored solutions, candles, and trays smudged with pastes, oils, and lotions.
>
> In one corner stands a small, neatly made cot. Several large tomes are stacked on the floor near its foot.

The cot is here because the workshop also serves as a home for Rajel s apprentice, Cral Redfoot. The books are introductory texts on chemistry, herbalism, and other related subjects.

Cral is a werewolf who came to town because he had heard about the Deepwood pack and the way its members had managed to celebrate both their human and their lupine heritages. He was not especially interested in becoming an alchemist s apprentice, but that was the only viable reason he could come up with for his interest in moving to Deepwood.

Creatures: Rajel is working alone in the shop when the PCs arrive.

Rajel Mendi: Female human Commoner 1; hp 3.

Negotiations: Rajel knows nothing about Cral s true nature. If asked about him, she says that he is a good apprentice willing to study hard and do what he s told. A successful Gather Information check (DC 15) gets her to add that he s not like other alchemists. If asked to elaborate, she explains that most of her colleagues are driven individuals who are obsessed with understanding the scientific basis of nature and altering its processes. But although Cral is a hard worker, he doesn t seem to have the natural inclination toward that sort of work that most alchemists show.

Development: Because Cral is a werewolf, the PCs may be able to turn up some of the evidence mentioned in the Deepwood pack sidebar in this building. There is nothing of special interest in the workshop.

Cral is nowhere to be found. If asked about his whereabouts, Rajel explains that he is probably out gathering ingredients they need for their current projects. In truth, he is one of the werewolves guarding the gold (see encounter D, below).

B7. TRAMMIL'S SHACK

Until recently, this small, rundown building was home to Trammil Nimman, the hanged werewolf. Trammil was a hunter who had been a member of the Deepwood community for more than ten years. Although he was not the most affable fellow in town, he was considered an upstanding and trusted citizen until his true nature was revealed.

Trammil was a solitary sort who didn t seem to mind living alone. He spent a good deal of his time out in the woods tracking and killing deer, bear, and other game that he would trade with other townsfolk for various goods and services.

Read or paraphrase the following aloud when the characters enter this cabin.

> The single room of this small cabin is a terrible mess. Whoever searched this place was none too delicate about it. Clothing lies everywhere, and personal possessions have been tossed about with some abandon.

Creatures: No one is here when the PCs arrive.

Development: A successful Search check (DC 15) in the shack turns up a leather-bound journal half-filled with handwritten text. The writing is the same shorthand used in the ledger that the townsfolk are guarding in the temple (area B11).

A PC may decode the book with a successful Decipher Script check (DC 25). A +10 insight bonus applies to this check if that PC has already deciphered the ledger. Some spells, such as *comprehend languages*, will also allow the characters to read the text.

This journal is Trammil s personal diary. Most of its entries have to do with the mundane details of his hunts how many animals he saw, what the conditions were, signs of upcoming weather patterns, and the like.

In the first half of the book, Trammil mentions the pack only in passing. The last fifteen pages, however, provide a detailed account of the pack s interactions with its new leader, including a full description of when and how the big wolf took over. In the last few entries, Trammil expresses his determination to discover the wolf s true identity and his belief that the creature means harm to all the people of Deepwood.

Though this journal confirms that there are several werewolves in Deepwood, it gives no names, professions, or other means of identifying them. Its language also strongly indicates that these werewolves are not the problem, since they have been living peacefully in the community for years. Clearly, it is the new leader who has upset the equilibrium.

B8. BASTONE'S FARM

This small farm is home to Kent Bastone, his wife Nadi, and their infant son Rustle. The Bastones grow some vegetables and potatoes and tend a mid-sized herd of sheep and goats, which supply the town with milk and other dairy products, wool, and occasionally meat.

Creatures: All three of the Bastones are present when the PCs arrive.

Kent and Nadi Bastone: Male and female human Commoner 1; hp 3.

Rustle Bastone: Noncombatant.

Negotiations: The Bastones relate the following pieces of information in response to appropriate PC questions.

- The local woods have always been home to more wolves than one would usually expect to find in such an area.
- Despite the size of the local wolf population, the Bastones rarely have trouble with predators raiding their herd.
- Once Kent thought he saw an especially large wolf chasing several smaller wolves away from the farm just as though he was protecting the herd.
- Since Trammil was hanged, the wolves seem to have disappeared. The night air used to ring with their baying, but now the darkness is disturbingly quiet.

Development: There is nothing of particular use to the investigation on this farm.

B9. UBERT'S SHACK

This small, neatly kept shack belongs to Nero Ubert, one of Deepwood s most eligible bachelors. Nero is a hunter who typically stalks rabbits, squirrels, pheasants, and other small game. He occasionally hunts with Gar Harth, and both used to hunt occasionally with Trammil Nimman.

Nero lives alone and has a well-deserved reputation for being a jocular, outgoing, flirtatious fellow. He is well liked by everyone in Deepwood**.** Unbeknownst to his neighbors, he is also a werewolf.

Creatures: No one is here when the PCs arrive.

Development: Examination of Nero s shack yields a few of the clues noted in the Deepwood Pack sidebar, but it contains no particularly useful or damning evidence.

Further Investigation: Nero s neighbors consider his absence from town unremarkable. If questioned about him by the PCs, they explain that Nero often disappears into the woods for up to a week when he is hunting.

This time, however, Nero has actually gone off on quite a different errand, though his neighbors are not aware of it. He is one of the werewolves guarding the gold in the Vale of the Silvery Moon (encounter D).

B10. TRACER'S HOUSE

This large cabin is home to Bale Tracer and his family. Both Bale and his wife Gritta are foresters by trade. On any given day, one of them is in the forest gathering wood, clearing underbrush to prevent particularly destructive forest fires, and examining the local flora and fauna for blights and disease, and the other is at home caring for their infant daughter Rika and toddler son Shep.

The Tracers moved to Deepwood only two years ago from a large city. No one knows why they packed up all their belongings and moved to this isolated town, but they have been good neighbors to everyone here.

The Tracers home has a main living area and four side chambers. The cabin is clean, but the furniture is somewhat shabby.

Creatures: Bale Tracer is at home today with the children.

- **Bale Tracer:** Male human Commoner 1; hp 3.
- **Rika and Shep Tracer:** Noncombatants.

Negotiations: A successful Diplomacy or Gather Information check (DC 30) convinces Bale to tell the PCs his story.

Bale Tracer was a successful merchant in the city where he once lived. Gritta was his fianc e, and they looked forward to a long and happy life together. Then the local magistrate took a fancy to Gritta. Though she spurned him, he paid her father an obscene amount of money to call off her betrothal to Tracer and promise her hand to him. Determined to marry even without her father s permission, Gritta and Bale packed up what belongings they could carry and moved as far away as they could get.

Development: Two of the four side chambers in the Tracers house are bedrooms. Another contains sealed crates and tarpaulin-covered furniture, and the fourth is a walk-in pantry filled with all sorts of items that might ordinarily be found in a general store. This home contains nothing of significance to the investigation.

B11. TEMPLE OF EHLONNA

This building was the town s only house of religious worship. But since the murder of the priestess Ishtal took place in the nave, the citizens of Deepwood now consider this temple a cursed place. Until they are certain that the danger has passed, they refuse to enter the temple alone.

> The exterior of this Temple of Ehlonna seems to be made of brick, but the building is so thickly covered in ivy that it is difficult to be certain. Inside, most of the space is taken up by a large nave. The ivy grows through the building s many open windows and covers the interior walls nearly as thickly as it does the outside.
>
> Six rows of benches fill the center of the room, and a slightly raised platform equipped with a lectern stands at the far end. Behind the platform is a single door.
>
> Two women are sitting on the benches closest to the lectern.

At Edvard s insistence, the town has placed Trammil s ledger on the lectern, and at least two townsfolk stand watch over it at all times. They believe that the book contains information about Trammil s accomplices, and they await one of two possible outcomes an attempted theft of the book by another werewolf, or the arrival of a traveler who can read the language in which the book is written.

Creatures: Currently, Lilly Kititch and Simone Harth are standing guard. They have been here for several hours chatting amiably, but they are still alert for intruders. They notice the PCs immediately unless the group purposely attempts to sneak in. To get in without alerting the guards, each PC must make a successful Hide check and Move Silently check (DC 20 for both).

- **Lilly Kititch:** Female human werewolf commoner 1; hp 20.
- **Simone Harth:** Female human Commoner 1; hp 3.

Negotiations: The women challenge the PCs and refuse to let them examine the ledger unless Edvard personally tells them it s all right. Even though Lilly (see area B1) is a werewolf, she feigns having only human abilities if attacked. Thus, the PCs should be able overcome these two women without any difficulty, but doing so would certainly damage their relations with the rest of the townsfolk.

The Ledger: The ledger is written in the same shorthand as the journal hidden in Trammil s shack (area B7). To understand the writing, a PC must succeed on a Decipher Script check (DC 25). A +10 insight bonus applies to this check if the character has already deciphered Trammil s journal. Some spells, such as *comprehend languages*, will also allow PCs to read the text.

The book contains scrupulous notes on how much gold was dug each night (usually between 5 and 15 pounds). The book indicates that all the gold has been buried somewhere called the Vale of the Silvery Moon. You will find gold under any mound that bears the mark of the pack, it says.

If the PCs ask, anyone in town can tell them where the glade is. If they decide to go there, continue the adventure with encounter C, below.

B12. FINCHER'S SHACK

This wooden shack belongs to Avi Fincher, a woodsman who spends most of his time gathering mushrooms and wild vegetables, or cultivating herbs and other medicinal plants. Avi sometimes spends weeks on end in the woods. He comes home only long enough to properly store his recent collections, restock supplies that are difficult or impossible to forage in the wild (such as wine, watertight pouches, and fresh clothing), and get a night or two s sleep in a bed. Understandably, the shack perpetually looks disheveled, as though it had recently been ransacked.

Creatures: When the PCs arrive in town, Avi is out in the woods with Rik Mendi (see area B5).

Development: There is nothing of interest to the investigation within Fincher s shack, but it might take the PCs some time to determine that fact.

B13. VIDAD'S HOUSE

This large home looks different than most others in town. Read or paraphrase the following aloud when the characters approach.

> This home does not look at all like the rustic, utilitarian homes around it. With decorative, colorful trim around its frame and eaves, planting boxes below its windows, and frilly curtains in every window, this building looks like something out of a fairy tale. Smoke drifts lazily from the chimney and fills the air with the smell of freshly baked bread.

This house belongs to Esther Vidad, an elderly woman who spent her life as a painter. Any PC that succeeds at a Knowledge (history), Knowledge (local), or Knowledge (nobility and royalty) check (DC 15) recognizes her name and knows that her work is highly prized among noble and merchant families far and wide.

After her husband passed away five years ago, Esther laid down her brushes and simply disappeared. In fact, she had retired to Deepwood so that she could spend her remaining years without the constant distraction of commissions and offers of patronage. She had never had any interest in the business end of her career; her husband had always tended that aspect. With him gone and a comfortable fortune in hand, she decided to disappear into Deepwood and paint whatever she liked.

Esther also serves as the local teacher, running a school in her home. All the children in town come to her house whenever their chores are done to learn reading, writing, basic mathematics, local history, and etiquette. She refuses, however, to teach painting, and she advises any of the children who inquire about this possibility to turn their interests to something more practical.

Creature: When the PCs arrive, Esther is in her home baking bread and cookies. She greets them effusively, offers them food, and answers their questions to the best of her ability.

Esther Vidad: Female human Commoner 1; hp 3.

Negotiations: Esther believes that the best way to deal with hard times is by sharing sweet food. She is a kind but slightly dotty woman who is willing to talk to the PCs about anything they like in fact, she ll talk their ears off if they let her.

There is nothing of particular use to the investigation in this house.

B14. JYLES FARM

This small farm is home to Pruert Jyles, his wife Ginny, and their teenage son Ython. They grow maize, cabbage, and other vegetables, plus some winter wheat.

All three members of the Jyles family are well liked in Deepwood. They are friendly, outgoing people who are always willing to help their neighbors with any project or difficulty. All three of them are also werewolves.

Creatures: No one is home at the Jyles farm when the PCs arrive.

Development: If the PCs investigate the farm, they may find some of the clues mentioned in the Deepwood Pack sidebar. Anyone who succeeds on a Spot check (DC 30) notices that there are no animals on the premises no livestock, horses, chickens, dogs, or cats. This fact is not necessarily damning, but it is strange for a farm.

Even stranger is the concept that a farming family would leave no one at home to tend the fields during growing season. A successful Survival check (DC 15) reveals that the fire in the hearth has been cold for at least two full days.

In fact, all three members of the Jyles family are currently standing watch over the pack s buried gold (see encounter D, below).

Further Investigation: No one in town knows anything about the absence of the Jyles family, and many think it odd. Several people claim to have seen one or another of the Jyles clan during the past couple of days, but there was nothing strange about those encounters. Some of the townsfolk find their absence ominous and suggest that the Jyles family might have fallen victim to the werewolves. Others suspect that the three farmers fled because they were Trammil s accomplices, and perhaps werewolves themselves.

B15. HARTH'S HOUSE

This cabin houses Gar Harth, his wife Simone, their daughter Pauline (21 years old), and their son Link (13 years old). Garth is a hunter who prefers stalking large prey and is especially fond of hunting dangerous animals such as bears and wolves. This preference causes his wife and daughter no end of anxiety, but Link admires his father and wants to follow in his footsteps.

Creature: When the PCs visit, only Pauline is at home. She explains that her father and brother have

gone into the woods so that Gar can begin teaching Link the tricks of the trade. Her mother is currently in the Temple of Ehlonna standing guard over Trammil s ledger.

Pauline Harth: Female human Commoner 1; hp 3.

Development: Pauline seems very out of place in Deepwood. A delicately beautiful young woman, she seems ill suited for life in the wilderness. If the PCs ask the right questions, she tells them that her mother grew up in a large city and moved here only because she loved Gar so very much. However, she raised her daughter to be a proper lady with refined etiquette. Now that she is old enough for marriage, Pauline finds that no one in this rustic little town suits her tastes. She desperately wants to go to a city any city but her father will not hear of it.

Nothing in this house is useful to the investigation.

B16. SONNAT'S HOUSE

This two-room cabin is home to Griggor Sonnat and his young son Harrold (5 years old). Griggor is a master potter and sculptor. Four times per year, a merchant arrives in town with an empty wagon, pays Griggor a handsome price, and carts off all the work the artisan has completed.

Griggor s wife Samsa died of pneumonia two years ago. For a while, the artist cared for Harrold on his own, but he found that he could not give his son the care he needed and still maintain a high enough productivity to keep his merchant benefactor happy. So Griggor took on an apprentice a young woman named Guerta Tishil. She lives in the pottery (area B17) and shares both childcare and production duties with Griggor.

Griggor is fond of Guerta and hopes to marry her one of these days. But first he must share the family secret with her that both he and his son are werewolves. Keeping this fact quiet has been quite difficult because Harrold is not yet old enough to understand the need for secrecy.

Creatures: Griggor and Harrold are at home when the PCs arrive.

Griggor Sonnat: Male human werewolf Expert 3; hp 25.

Harrold Sonnat: Noncombatant werewolf.

Negotiations: Griggor greets the PCs politely, gives his permission for them to look around, and then goes to check on his son, who is asleep in the bedroom.

Griggor is willing to answer any questions the PCs have, but he objects to them interrogating his son, claiming the boy would be needlessly upset by talk of murder and monsters. If the PCs do get a chance to speak to the boy somehow and mention anything about werewolves, the boy happily informs them that he is one, and so is his daddy. Griggor, if confronted with this information, does not deny it but acts as noted in the Deepwood Pack sidebar.

Development: While searching the cabin, the PCs may discover some of the clues discussed in the Deepwood Pack sidebar. There is nothing of particular use to the investigation here.

B17. POTTERY WORKSHOP

This is the building where Griggor Sonnat spins bowls, cups, vases, and other pottery on his wheel. He also keeps carving tools here and sometimes carves sculptures from large blocks of wood. The walls are lined with cabinets that are partially filled with beautiful ceramics.

Creature: This building is also home to Guerta Tishil, Griggor s apprentice and part-time nanny for the artist s young son Harrold (see area B16). Guerta knows that Griggor and his son are werewolves because Harrold told her so the first week she was in town. Although she was frightened nearly to death at first, she has come to realize that the artisan and his son are gentle, loving souls who would never hurt anyone. Indeed, when the moon calls out the beasts inside them, they flee the town and spend the night in the woods so that they will not inadvertently harm anyone.

Guerta Tishil: Female human Commoner 1; hp 3.

Negotiations: Guerta does not willingly share this information with anyone. She deeply loves both Griggor and Harrold and would never betray their secrets. In truth, she hopes that the master craftsman will one day think of her as more than an apprentice and propose marriage.

Development: A Search check (DC 15) in the pottery workshop turns up a small wooden bust of a howling wolf. Guerta has been working on this carving for some time. It is based on the only glimpse she has ever gotten of Griggor in his wolf form. If questioned about it, she claims that it is simply her way of dealing with the fears raised by the current situation. If I can carve it, she says, then I feel I have some measure of control over it.

B18. BISTLE MANOR (EL 14)

This mansion is the home of Armon Bistle, the richest man in Deepwood. Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs approach the building.

Bistle Manor
one square equals 5 feet
central chimney
3rd floor
S
guest room
bath
master bedroom
central chimney
study
guest room
guest room
2nd floor
S
kitchen
pantry
parlor
central fireplace
dining room
servant's suite
1st floor

In a larger town, this building would be considered overly large and unnecessarily ostentatious. In Deepwood, it is the dominant architectural feature. Easily as big as any four other homes combined, this garish yellow house is covered in decorative molding painted a tawdry green color. The building has two floors, and a wide, ornamental chimney rises high above the center of the roof.

Anyone looking at the exterior may attempt a Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check (DC 15) or a Spot check (DC 25) to notice that the decorative chimney has been constructed in such a way that it might actually house a third, windowless story.

Creatures: Armon Bistle is at home when the PCs arrive in town. His butler, Darby Mastiff, answers the door if the PCs ring the bell. He shows them into the parlor and goes to fetch Armon, who is in his study considering what he should do about the Deepwood pack and how to get his hands on Trammil s ledger.

Darby Mastiff: Male human Commoner 1; hp 3.

Armon Bistle: Male human Rogue 6; CR 14; Medium humanoid; HD 6d6+6; hp 27; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +4; Grp +5; Atk +7 melee (1d4+3/19—20, +2 *dagger*); Full Atk +7 melee (1d4+3/19—20, +2 *dagger*); SA sneak attack +3d6; SQ evasion, trap sense +2, trapfinding, uncanny dodge; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +10, Will +4; Str 13, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +12, Bluff +11, Decipher Script +12, Diplomacy +6, Escape Artist +12, Gather Information +11, Hide +12, Intimidate +13, Listen +8, Move Silently +12, Search +12, Sense Motive +9, Spot +8, Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Dodge.

Evasion (Ex): If exposed to any effect that normally allows a character to attempt a Reflex saving throw for half damage, Armon takes no damage with a successful saving throw.

Trap Sense (Ex): Armon has a +2 bonus on Reflex saves made to avoid traps and a +2 dodge bonus to AC.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): Armon retains his Dexterity bonus to AC even if he is caught flat-footed or struck by an invisible attacker.

Possessions: +2 *dagger, cloak of resistance* +2, *Gnarlpaw's fang.*

Negotiations: Darby is quite well aware of his master s character and history (including the recent debacle with the werewolves), but he guards his tongue carefully and says nothing about such matters at least not of his own accord.

When Darby tells Armon of the PCs arrival, the lord of the manor comes to the parlor and greets the visitors somewhat irritably. If they ask to examine Bistle Manor, he pointedly asks them to be quick about it, then mutters that investigators should be spending their time doing something to help this frightened community rather than trying to pin the blame on the richest man in town.

Development: If Armon knows the PCs are there, he follows them from room to room, constantly pointing out how unfair it is for people to assume that someone who is rich must also be evil. He is actually trying to annoy them into rushing their investigation, hoping that they will overlook any clues that may be lying around.

Ground Floor

The ground floor has five rooms the parlor, dining room, kitchen, pantry, and servants suite.

Parlor

This large, open room serves as both a foyer and a place to entertain guests. Read or paraphrase the following when the characters enter this room.

Expensive couches and settees, tapestries, and other art objects have been placed tastefully around the room. Dominating the far wall is a large fireplace flanked by staircases leading up. On the southern edge of the eastern wall is a double door leading into the dining room.

On the northern side of the eastern wall is a secret door (Spot DC 15) that leads into the kitchen. This construction provides a servant s entrance that does not disturb the room s ambiance.

Dining Room

A tremendous, polished-oak table large enough to seat thirty guests is the dominant feature of the dining room. The exterior wall is covered with windows that stretch from waist height nearly to the ceiling. Along the inner wall are a large fireplace and a door that leads into the kitchen.

Kitchen

This kitchen has enough space and equipment to prepare meals fit for kings and queens. The oven is built into the building s central fireplace. Doors in the east and south walls lead to the pantry and the dining room, respectively.

Pantry

This large, walk-in pantry is filled with dried and preserved foods. A door in the south wall leads to the servant s suite, and one in the west wall leads to the kitchen.

Servants' Suite

This single-room apartment can house as many as four servants. Along each wall stand a cot and a small wardrobe, and a potbellied-stove occupies the middle of the room.

Creature: At the moment, Armon has only one servant a butler/cook named Darby Mastiff. Darby has worked for Armon for more than ten years and displays unflagging loyalty to his master.

Second Floor

The second floor has six rooms: the master bedroom, three guest bedrooms, a study, and a bath.

Master Bedroom

This chamber is where Armon Bistle sleeps. Read or paraphrase the following when the characters enter.

> An opulent, canopied bed dominates this room, and thick velvet draperies shade its many windows. In the northwest corner is a writing desk, and a large wardrobe stands against the southeast wall. A fireplace is built into the eastern wall.

The room gets most of its heat from the central chimney. On the north side of the fireplace is a secret door (Search DC 20), behind which is a staircase that leads up to the library.

Creature: Armon Bistle is still following the PCs if they have not yet found a way to lose him.

Development: If the PCs find this secret door while Armon is trailing them, he realizes the jig is up and he must escape. He stops following them and tries to move off quietly down the corridor, using a Move Silently check. If he succeeds in removing himself from their line of vision, he uses his Hide and Move Silently skills to leave the house without their notice. Once outside, he runs as fast as possible to the cover of a nearby building, hides again, and uses *Gnarlpaw's Fang* to change into his wolf form. Then he goes straight to the Temple of Ehlonna, grabs Trammil s ledger from the lectern, and escapes into the woods with it, ignoring the guards no matter what they do.

If the PCs are watching him closely enough that he cannot easily sneak away from them, he uses his Bluff skill to distract them while he makes his escape. If that fails, he signals Darby (with two thumps on the floor), who comes to create a distraction for his master.

If the PCs notice his escape and attempt to pursue him before he can leave the house, Armon transforms into his hybrid form (see encounter D) and fights them. If he defeats them or forces them to retreat, he goes to the temple and takes the book, as described above.

Treasure: A successful Search check (DC 10) in this room reveals an unexpectedly large number of coins and jewels stashed under the mattress, in drawers, and in other hiding places. The hoard has a total value of 1,000 gp.

Guest Bedrooms

Read or paraphrase the following aloud when the PCs enter any of these rooms.

> Each of these chambers is richly appointed. It is furnished with a large, soft feather bed, a finely crafted wardrobe, and a dresser with washbowl and mirror. A small fireplace set into the interior wall brings heat in from the central chimney.

Study

The bookshelves lining these walls are filled with volumes on a wide variety of subjects. Many are rare first editions or unique journals written or drawn by famous authors and artists. Four plush leather chairs surround a low table in the center of the room. A decanter of brandy and four large snifters stand on the table, ready for guests.

Development: Any PC browsing these shelves may attempt a Knowledge (history) or Appraise check (DC 20) to realize that the books were probably stolen.

Bath

Drains set into the floor of this tiled chamber empty to the rear of the house through spigots. Two large tubs occupy the center of the room. The six wooden buckets near one wall are obviously meant for carrying hot water up from the kitchen.

Third Floor

The third floor consists of a single, windowless room that serves as Armon s library.

Library

Armon uses this chamber to store most of the treasure that he filched from the towns where he lived previously. Chests of gold and platinum coins ring the chamber, and small bags of gems are scattered around the room. You may also place any additional treasure you

deem appropriate here. *Gnarlpaw's fang* is not in this hoard because Armon keeps it with him at all times.

Development: A successful Search check (DC 15) in this room reveals a small, leather-bound journal. The writing inside is in the same language as Trammil s journal (see area B7) and the ledger that the villagers are guarding in the temple (area B11). A successful Decipher Script check (DC 25) allows a character to read the writing. A +10 insight bonus applies to this check if that PC has already deciphered one of the other books. Certain spells, such as *comprehend languages*, will also allow the subject to read the text. Whether or not the PCs can read the book, a successful Spot check (DC 10) reveals that this text is written in a different hand than that in the other two books.

The journal describes Armon s actions in the cities he previously called home specifically, how he went about conning his neighbors out of their money and valuables. The book also describes *Gnarlpaw's fang* and its powers, as well as Armon s plans to blackmail the members of the Deepwood pack. What s more, it lists all the local werewolves names. The entries finish with a detailed account of how Armon slew the priestess in the temple in order to get Trammil killed.

Treasure: The total value of the treasure in this chamber is 5,800 gp.

C. A HARD DAY'S FLIGHT

Depending on how their investigations have gone up to this point, the PCs should by now either know that the gold is in the Vale of the Silvery Moon or be chasing Armon Bistle through the woods as he leads them toward that site.

The exact setup for this phase of the adventure depends on what happened in town. Armon Bistle may have escaped with Trammil s ledger, or the PCs may already have defeated him. The group may have conclusive evidence of exactly which citizens are members of the Deepwood pack, or they may still be struggling to decide whether Trammil was the only werewolf in town. You as DM must modify the material below based on what the PCs have determined from their investigation so far.

If Armon Bistle escaped with Trammil s ledger (or with information gleaned from it) and the PCs are chasing him, continue with encounter C1, below. If they deciphered the information in the ledger and are trying to retrieve the gold themselves, go to encounter C2 instead.

C1. TRACKING ARMON

Armon Bistle makes the trip through the forest in wolf form, so he does not leave the same marks of passage that a humanoid would. In fact, his tracks look no different than those of any other large wolf. To make matters even more difficult, the forest in this area is filled with wolf tracks made by various members of the Deepwood pack.

Because of the difficulty involved in separating Armon s trail from the other tracks, any PC attempting to follow Armon using the Track feat takes a —4 penalty on the required Survival checks. Anyone trying to follow him using only the Spot skill takes a —8 penalty on the checks.

Armon moves at 50 feet in wolf form, and the PCs probably have to move at half speed to track him. If this is the case, the PCs won t arrive until the battle in the vale is already well underway (see encounter D2b, below). If they have some means of keeping up with him, they arrive when he does (see encounter D2a, below).

C2. ASKING DIRECTIONS

If the characters have translated Trammil s ledger, they already know that Armon (if he is still alive) is probably heading for the Vale of the Silvery Moon. Anyone in Deepwood can give them easy-to-follow directions to the grove, and any human citizen would happily lead the group there if asked.

If the characters still do not know the truth about the Deepwood pack (or know the truth but have not revealed that they do), the werewolf citizens are a bit uncertain about the wisdom of leading the PCs to the

ARMON'S BACKUP PLAN

Even if the PCs do not find the secret door in Bistle Manor, their arrival in town and insistence on poking their noses into Ishtal's murder and Trammil's subsequent hanging have made Armon extremely nervous. At some point when the characters are relatively far from the Temple of Ehlonna, he steals the ledger from the temple (see B18, Master Bedroom) and flees into the woods—hopefully before the PCs can respond.

If he escapes from town with the ledger, he stops as soon as he feels safe and reads it. Within 1 round of perusal, he determines where the gold has been hidden and heads for the Vale of the Silvery Moon.

place where they have been hiding the gold. But, for the sake of keeping up appearances, even they are willing to perform this task if so requested. A PC who succeeds at a Sense Motive check (DC 15), however, notices that such a guide seems hesitant about helping.

Whatever means the characters choose to find the Vale of the Silvery Moon delays their departure, ensuring that they arrive after the battle is underway (see encounter D2b, below) if Armon has preceded them.

D. THE VALE OF THE SILVERY MOON (EL 6 OR 14)

A few clearings exist even in the heart of the deepest forest. In these grass-covered meadows, one can bask in the sunlight or stare up at the stars completely unfettered by the leafy canopy that covers the rest of the woods. Rabbits, badgers, skunks, and other burrowing animals often build their warrens in such meadows because the thick grass makes it easier to hide from predators and the open space makes it more difficult for the larger carnivores to approach stealthily.

Read or paraphrase the following when the characters approach.

> Just ahead, the shady stretches of forest open into a meadow. No tiny dapples of sunlight dance over the ground here; the grove is brightly lit, and the wind blows freely through the knee-high grass.

The Vale of the Silvery Moon got its name because the human residents of Deepwood noticed that the glade was filled with baying wolves on nights of the full moon. These creatures, naturally, were the members of the Deepwood pack, howling their devotions to their lunar mistress.

As Trammil wrote in his ledger, the Deepwood pack has hidden all the gold its members have mined here in the vale. They chose this spot because the disturbed earth makes it nearly impossible to distinguish the animal dens from the places where something is buried. The pack marked each hiding spot with wolf scent so that its members could easily find the locations. Any other werewolf or indeed, any creature with the scent special quality can easily detect which mounds have a lupine scent.

The werewolves chose this method of marking the spots for several reasons. First, it was a good way to ensure that none of their human neighbors accidentally happened across the gold. Such an event would be particularly tragic, the werewolves felt, because it might cause their leader to order the humans deaths. More importantly, though, they believed that such a method of hiding the treasure constituted their best chance to learn the identity of their new leader. Whoever showed himself capable of finding the buried gold, they reasoned, must be the mysterious werewolf.

This plan, of course, is not as foolproof as the pack first believed. The PCs might have any number of ways of achieving the same effect. If they manage to locate any of the gold, they might find themselves in an unexpected confrontation with some very angry werewolves.

D1. HAZARDOUS GROUND

Literally hundreds of burrows dug by small mammals and rodents honeycomb the ground in this clearing. Small mounds of earth alternate with entrance holes to tunnels, making the ground surprisingly uneven. However, these excavations do not become obvious until someone begins to walk through the grass.

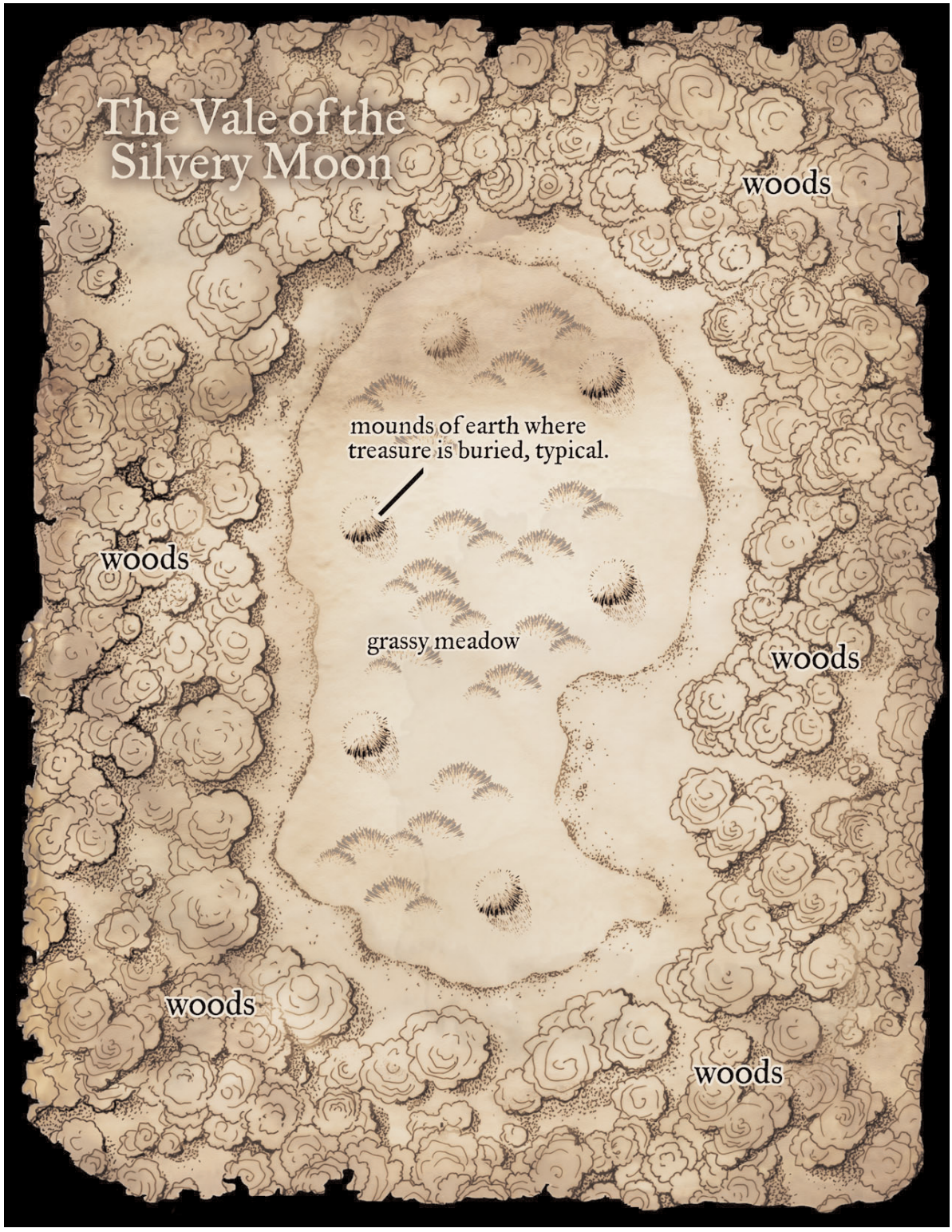
Anyone attempting to run through the clearing must make a successful Balance check (DC 12) or stumble and fall halfway through his movement. Such a character ends up prone and must spend a move action on his next turn to regain his feet.

A character intending to use the full attack action while standing in this grassy meadow must first succeed on a Balance check (DC 12). Success means the character may continue normally; failure means he has chosen a piece of ground with particularly bad footing on which to make his stand. Such a character may choose to make the full attack normally, but he stumbles and falls prone immediately afterward. Alternatively, he may spend a move action to set his feet more firmly and then make a single melee attack.

D2. THE DEEPWOOD UPRISING

Since the first night that they buried gold in the Vale of the Silvery Moon, the members of the Deepwood pack have made sure that two or more of their number are always on guard in the meadow. At first, they simply hoped to learn the identity of their tormentor so that they could negotiate with him for the pack s release. Trammil s hanging, however, convinced them to go against their canine nature and simply turn on their evil leader.

Creatures: Five werewolves Ginny Jyles, Pruert Jyles, Ython Jyles, Cral Redfoot, and Nero Ubert are presently hiding in the woods near the Vale of the Silvery Moon. Each has selected a different hiding place so as to get the best view of the meadow and lower


The Vale of the Silvery Moon
woods
mounds of earth where treasure is buried, typical.
woods
grassy meadow
woods
woods
woods

the risk of detection. Any character who specifically looks for people hidden in the woods may attempt a Spot check (DC 25) to notice one member of the Deepwood pack. For every 5 points by which the Spot check result exceeds the required DC, the character notices another of the hidden werewolves. (Thus, a character would spot two werewolves on a check result of 30, three on a 35, four on a 45, and all five on a 45.)

Human Werewolf Warriors (5): hp 20 (see *Monster Manual*, pages 173-175 and page 178).

D2a. On-Time Arrival

If the PCs have arrived at the glade at the same time as Armon, the other werewolves observe them for a while before choosing a target. Armon arrives in wolf form, but if the PCs are present and attempt to talk to him, he shifts to hybrid form.

Tactics: The only person the werewolves really want to kill is their mysterious evil leader. Depending on the interaction between the PCs and Armon (and who shows interest in finding and digging up the gold), the werewolves may decide to attack just Armon, just the PCs, or everyone in the vale.

Lacking any other basis for a decision, the hidden werewolves attack anyone who correctly identifies more than one of the mounds in which the gold is hidden. If there is more than one potential target, the werewolves choose one that has displayed wolflike tendencies (such as adopting wolf or hybrid form, or using the scent ability) before any that appear to be normal humanoids.

Negotiations: Negotiating with the Deepwood pack is difficult at this point, since its members have little interest in sparing their tormentor. At this stage, they are prepared for a battle to the death and have whipped themselves into a state of bloodlust. In fact, they so anticipate the coming battle that they may make unfortunate errors, such as confusing a PC s wolf animal companion (or a PC who has assumed wolf form via wild shape or *polymorph*) for their hated opponent.

To prevent the werewolves from attacking, or to get them to cease attacking after they have already begun, a PC may attempt a Diplomacy check opposed by the Will saving throws of each werewolf in turn. If another member of the Deepwood pack is present (for instance, someone from town who led the PCs to the glade), each PC gains a +5 circumstance bonus on the check, and each attacking werewolf gets a —5 penalty on the save.

D2b. Late Arrivals

If the PCs were delayed in getting to the glade and Armon has preceded them there, they arrive after the battle between Armon and the Deepwood pack has already begun. Read or paraphrase the following when they arrive.

> In the clearing, a horrible battle is raging. Five large, muscular wolves are circling and attacking a massive half-man half-wolf creature. The wolves dash in and bite at their opponent, who in turn slashes at their hides with his wicked claws. All the combatants are bloodied, but the hybrid creature seems to be in much better shape than any of the wolves.

Armon the hybrid stands in the middle of a constantly moving ring of wolves that duck in, attack, and then dash back into the ring.

Creatures: All five of the Deepwood werewolves who have been standing guard in the clearing are attacking Armon Bistle, who is in hybrid form.

Tactics: The werewolves strategy is to keep their opponent trapped and wear him down with hit-and-run tactics. Armon s plan is to grab and grapple with one of his opponents, snap its neck, and then move on to another. As the fight progresses, the combatants switch back and forth between their wolf and hybrid forms whenever doing so provides an advantage.

Reduce all the combatants to one-half their usual hit points to reflect damage already taken, then let the PCs roll initiative and enter the fray as desired. As indicated above, negotiating with the Deepwood pack may prove difficult, but once Armon is defeated, the werewolves may be willing to listen to reason. Armon, on the other hand, has no interest in any outcome except the death of every other creature in the glade.

Treasure: The total value of the unrefined gold buried in the Vale of the Silvery Moon is 6,000 gp. The cave still contains a like amount, though mining it is difficult and time-consuming. If the werewolves continue to do the mining, they can extract only half as much per day as they did before.

ENDING THE ADVENTURE

Once the fighting, biting, and clawing are over, the PCs must make their peace with the members of the Deepwood pack. Doing so may prove difficult if they have killed or permanently injured any pack members during the climactic battle. You as DM should determine the outcome of any Diplomacy checks or other attempts they make to calm the werewolves.

If the PCs have brought the matter to a satisfactory close and helped the werewolves make peace with their neighbors, the town of Deepwood offers them the gold from the grove as a reward. Otherwise, the werewolves offer them half of the gold for their aid and keep the rest to build themselves a new town elsewhere.

FURTHER ADVENTURES

If the PCs lost the fight with Armon, they may want to go after him. Doing so requires tracking him down again, since Armon Bistle has decided to retire this time for good. Not even a cave of gold can tempt him back into his old way of life now; the Deepwood incident came much too close to killing him. If he manages to escape, he changes his name, finds another town just as remote as Deepwood, and builds another large house using the gold from the glade and his home.

In the meantime, Darby the butler gathers up the valuables from the library in Bistle Manor and travels to a large city of your choice. There he settles in to await word from Armon that a new home has been established. When the message arrives, he brings the valuables, along with any other materials or goods that Armon requires, to the new site, and the two of them establish themselves in their new home.

Unless the PCs use extraordinary methods, Armon should be untraceable once he escapes from Deepwood. If you wish, however, the they may eventually happen across him in his new hometown. They may not recognize him immediately, since he has changed his hair color, grooming habits, and wardrobe. His disguise is so effective (+10 on Disguise checks) that the characters might not recognize him even if they do find him.

NEW MAGIC ITEM

The following minor artifact allows Armon Bistle to carry out his nefarious plans in Deepwood. It may be introduced into any campaign.

GNARLPAW'S FANG

This talisman appears to be a wolf s fang strung on a simple leather band. The tooth, however, is the fang of the legendary werewolf lord Gnarlpaw.

Anyone wearing this talisman gains the ability to transform into Gnarlpaw as a full-round action, choosing either his dire wolf or his hybrid form (use the Werewolf Lord statistics in the lycanthrope entry of the *Monster Manual* as a base). While in one of these two forms, the wearer of this talisman gains the use of all of Gnarlpaw s special qualities, special attacks, feats, and skills, though he may also continue to make use of his own feats and any of his own skill modifiers that are better than the werewolf lord s.

Normally, a lycanthrope has a single recognizable scent, no matter what form it takes. But since the wearer actually becomes Gnarlpaw for a time, he smells like Gnarlpaw when in wolf or hybrid form, and like his humanoid self when in humanoid form. Thus, scent does not betray the wearer s identity when he is in humanoid form, the way it would a real werewolf. Every person who wears *Gnarlpaw's fang* becomes exactly the same creature when the talisman is activated and thus looks and smells like Gnarlpaw.

The wearer has full control over his form when wearing the talisman and can activate it or dismiss the effect whenever he chooses. Wearing *Gnarlpaw's fang* does not necessitate a change of form during full moon.

Strong transmutation; CL 19.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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